

Beckingham Parish Council

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Wednesday 1st June 2016 at 7.30pm

Present: Cllr L Tatton (LT) – Chair, Cllr P Thorpe (PT), Cllr P Wells (PW), Cllr A Brewer, Cllr G Else (GE)
Terry Brown/Parish Clerk (TB).
District Cllr Sue Howe (SH)
14 members of the public

Minute	Action
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16/59 Apologies for absence.

County Cllr Ray Phillips
Mark Leggott (Beckingham Highway Trust), Nick Ashworth (Poor Gardens)

16/60 Approval of the minutes of the previous Annual Parish Meeting held 1st June 2015.

The minutes were approved and signed.

16/62 Chairman's report.

"Welcome to the 2016 Annual Parish Meeting for Beckingham, I am the Current Chairman and this is Terry Brown, the Parish Clerk.

The reason for this meeting is to give a report to the community on the activities of the Parish Council over the past 12 months and for any other organisation, club, company or individual to do the same. It is also a statutory meeting that must be carried out. The meeting must be arranged by the PC and within a prescribed timescale.

You will notice that the screen is showing random views old and new of the village and its surroundings, this will give you something to look at whilst I drone on, but there it will be interrupted to show items on the basis that a picture is worth a 1000 words.

So, to commence the report, the Council is made up of myself, Trish Thorpe as vice chair, and the other councillors being Andy Brewer, the long serving Grahame Else, and a new kid on the block, Philip Wells.

We have a full complement of councillors and we have in the course of the past year, following suitable outside training, appointed Terry Brown as Responsible Financial Officer, this being a designated role of a Parish Clerk. I would like to take this opportunity once again to thank the others just mentioned for their support and efforts during the past year.

For those who don't know, the Parish Council meets bi-monthly, and occasionally there are extra meetings as found necessary that are held here in this hall to discuss and review events that have an impact on the Parish of Beckingham, the meetings are open to the public, time is set aside at the commencement of each meeting for questions, comments or even praise to be received from members of the public.

Regular attendees at the meetings are County and District Councillors, Ray Phillips from the County Council and Pat Woodman and Sue Howe from NKDC, the PC would like to thank them for their unwavering support, advice and assistance that we receive from them, our task would be a lot harder without their presence.

A quick run through the past year:

We have received the usual clutch of planning applications, alterations to a barn, a garden house building, Tree Preservation Order application, a couple of house extensions, Wind turbines in an adjacent Parish and an application to erect Agricultural Accommodation. We usually make no comment on applications as there is no cause to, except for the wind turbines which we objected to and the Agricultural Accommodation which we positively supported.

Following an earlier complaint to LCC Highways prior to last year's meeting, two days after the meeting, some work was undertaken on the A17 to alleviate poor drainage in order to maintain a safe road during heavy rain. Further letters have been sent to LCC regarding issues such a road safety, the difficulty of accessing and egress from the village from the A17, as well as drainage issues at the bottom of Hillside. The answer to all these letters has been the same, no staff, no money and basically no chance of them doing anything.

September brought the welcome news that the Big Lottery Fund has treated the application made by the Play Park Project to have the field drainage improved, was successful.

In November, we discovered following discussions with out Insurers that the Play Park was not insured for Public Liability, due to the lack of an up to date external inspection and more importantly, the complete lack of regular weekly recorded inspections that would satisfy the Company's need to ensure the relevant level of Health and Safety was being maintained. We took a decision in December after discussions at an Extraordinary Parish Council Meeting that the Play Park needed to be closed until the situation was rectified.

This involved a four-figure sum for inspection and remedial works which included the removal of the roundabout, an item which had previously been the cause of an incident and should have been removed previously.

December brought Christmas and a well-attended Christmas tree lighting and get together was held in the Village Hall.

January followed with the resignation of the entire Play Park Project committee en masse, citing a lack of support for their ideals from the PC and the community as a whole. We were naturally dismayed by this action but would like to express our thanks for their work in the past in formulating a vision for the field and their efforts in fund raising.

The work to drain the Playing Field was due to be have been completed by early January, but due to the winter being rather wet, the field was too waterlogged to support the weight of the drainage machinery and therefore the work did not start until March and was completed in late April.

Still on the subject of the Playing Field, it has become knowledge since first being reported in August, that professional dog walkers driving up to the Playing Field on Sutton Road and using it as dog walking field. This prompted us in August to buy and erect signs indicating that it is a Playing Field and that dogs are not welcome. This message does not seem to have percolated to members of the village who are still using the field as a dog toilet. This is a situation that will be addressed.

The Amenity Woodland that was discussed at last year's Meeting and the reasons for its cost implications to the Parish were explained. The feeling at the Meeting was that the best way forward was to attempt to dispose of the area of land. We have had long discussions with NKDC's Planning, Legal and other departments who have advised us of the correct procedures to follow. This resulted in us being able to be in contact with three interested parties and finally at the end of February we held an Extraordinary Parish Council Meeting to discuss acceptance of an offer from one of them. The

Meeting decided to accept the offer for the land and a sale has concluded. The land is no longer the property of the Parish Council, but is still to be maintained as an Amenity Woodland.

Finally, failures, you will know by now that the nearest NKDC refuse disposal sites at Leadenham and Whisby are too close to save costs. We were informed of this by our LCC councillor and he further stated that we are able as we are close to make use of the NCC site in Brunel Drive in Newark. However, within a week of this NCC announced a registration scheme so that only NCC rate payers can use the site. We have written to NCC and stated that as we have a Newark STD code, some of our GP services are in Newark and therefore some of us will use Newark and Sherwood hospital or even Kings Mill, therefore could the residents of LN5 0Rx use the Newark site. We received a prompt reply saying that even though we have an LN postcode of course we can use an NCC site, however the one at Retford may be more convenient. The good lady did not realise that there are two Beckinghams. At least we tried.

Another, so far is the Post Box, we are trying to encourage the Post Office to give a little TLC to the post mounted Post Box on Sleaford Road, to date it remains unloved.

Yet another, Hillside drainage. We continue to write to Highways without any form of satisfactory response. We are arranging yet another on site meeting with the responsible officer, who it must be said is totally sympathetic with our cause, but has to abide by the constraints that are imposed on his actions by higher financial authorities. We shall continue to press as the one social facility in the village is often threatened with flooding thereby reducing his business activities.

That concludes the report for the Parish Council, and I welcome any comments or questions before we move on to reports from community groups."

16/63 Reports from Community Groups.

Cllr Sue Howe reported:

"Full Council last week considered the subject of Devolution, whereby ten Councils in Greater Lincolnshire signed up to a deal with Government to have powers, resources and responsibilities devolved to the region. The first tranche includes a single pot of £450m of investment (£15m per year for 30 years) in addition to devolved powers. Members of all ten councils will be asked to approve a public consultation of proposals, to begin no later than 4 July 2016.

V-Flume, the first of its kind in the UK opened at 1NK, North Hykeham - taking its name appropriately from aviation heritage within the District. 1NK provides its residents its resident with the opportunity to enjoy a range of sport and leisure activities and a varied programme of Arts events at The Terry O'Toole Theatre. On 3.06.16 there is a Wellbeing Day, 12noon-4pm, inviting the audience to design and make theatre costumes alongside the Arts NK Danceteam offering vitality exercise for the over 60s.

Residents have until 7th June to register to vote in the EU Referendum on 23.06.16.

Armed Forces Day is on Friday, 24.6.16 when veterans of the Armed Forces will be presented with a badge in recognition of service. Deadline to apply is 31.05.16 and details of DOB/Service No. and a brief military resume is required.

A "Safe as Houses" initiative has been launched, providing landlords with advice and guidance bringing properties up to an acceptable living standard, working also to support tenants.

The Witham & Brant Cluster Group met last night and will meet again on 6.09.16 at Norton Lodge, Norton Disney.

The District is working alongside CAB and Job Centre+ to deliver efficient and effective services for residents, thus avoiding duplication of its efforts and skills, knowledge and expertise for all concerned.

The 9th annual Spires & Steeples Challenge is on 16.10.16, consisting of a 26-mile walk or run from Lincoln Castle to Sleaford, passing through numerous villages and landmarks along the way and it also marks forty years of The Viking Way. A very popular event, attracting many visitors to the District from far afield."

Village Hall Management Committee:

Graham Else reported a successful year for the use of the Village Hall with every indication that the increased use of the Hall will continue. Remedial work on the roof is scheduled to take place in the year.

The Committee' accounts were tabled (see the web page <http://beckinghamvillage.co.uk/pdfs/accounts/VHaccounts2016.pdf>).

Police:

The Clerk read out a summary of the Annual Police Report for the village. The Police would encourage more residents to make use of their property marking service in order to prevent burglaries to outbuildings.

The full report can be seen at http://beckinghamvillage.co.uk/pdfs/notices/police_report15-16.pdf

Parochial Church Council:

Val Rampton outlined the progress made by the PCC in updating the facilities in the Church and bringing the safeguarding regime up to date. She reminded the meeting of the high cost (£800 pa) of keeping the grass around in a tidy state.

16/64 Open Forum.

LT opened the item by indicating possible areas of development and improvement in the future by the Parish Council; for example, improving the appearance of Sleaford Road adjacent to the church, removing a derelict bus shelter on Sutton Road and carrying out repairs to the Village Hall porch, toilets, and leaking roof.

He invited views on the Playing Field, how do we decide on a way forward, usage, additional facilities for children, children of what age group and who to take the issue forward.

There was a wide-ranging discussion but the main issue was one of grass cutting. Comments were made about the variations in the quality of upkeep in different parts of the village with specific sites at the junction of Chapel Lane and Sleaford road being most problematic. The problem in this particular site had been exacerbated by long running building works.

In reply LT outlined the development of grass cutting in the village since the Parish Council had assumed responsibility from LCC. Specific problems remained with areas cut by NKDC.

Further LT reminded the meeting that the LCC grant subsidy to the Parish Council for grass cutting would cease in the next financial year (i.e. April 1st 2017 onwards) and that there was the increased probability that the Parish Council in the near future would have to assume the cost of services currently provided for free by agencies such as NKDC and LCC.

There was some discussion about fly tipping with a caravan by the A17 cited as an example. LT replied that reporting fly tipping is a joint responsibility of all parishioners and not the sole responsibility of the Parish Council. The relevant NKDC contact number was Janet Williams Environmental Health Manager North Kesteven District Council Tel:01529 41415

The meeting closed at 8.45pm

Date of Next Meeting: Wednesday 27th July 2016